



Press Release

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Auditors must work together across borders, says German audit chief

Auditors from around the European Union will need to work together more closely in future if cross-border financial problems such as VAT fraud are to be addressed efficiently, the head of the German national audit office has said while attending a conference in Luxembourg.

"VAT fraud is costing the EU billions of euros in lost revenue in areas from new car purchases to internet services. The Member States must improve cooperation if they want to get to grips with this problem and rebuild the confidence of citizens in their governments as effective problem solvers", said Kay Scheller, President of the German National Audit Office, "Cross-border problems require transnational solutions."

Mr Scheller was speaking in Luxembourg at a high-level international conference of auditors marking the 40th anniversary of the European Court of Auditors.

"It is clear that cooperation between supreme audit institutions will need to play a much greater role in addressing Europe's current challenges", emphasised Klaus-Heiner Lehne, the President of the European Court of Auditors. He added that "European questions need European answers. For our part, we are determined to ensure that every euro spent at EU level brings clear added value. We will remain an independent voice that gives credit when things go well, but is not afraid to speak out inconvenient truths."

Notes to Editors

The European Court of Auditors was established by the Treaty of Brussels of 22 July 1975 and started work on 18 October 1977. Its Members held their first meeting on 25 October of the same year.

The Contact Committee of the Heads of Supreme Audit Institutions (SAIs) of the European Union and the European Court of Auditors meets annually to discuss matters of common interest focused around EU policy and financial management issues, and to agree, as needed, on joint activities when these can achieve greater impact.

This year's Contact Committee meeting is being hosted by the European Court of Auditors in Luxembourg on 12-13 October 2017. The main focus of discussion is whether SAIs can contribute to restoring the trust of EU citizens. The meeting includes a review of the current state of the EU and the reasons for which citizens seem to be losing trust, followed by sessions on the role of SAIs in the EU, innovative audit products and forms of communication with stakeholders.

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